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TO: Members of the State Board of Education

FROM: Lillian M. Lowery, Ed.D. *Lillian M. Lowery*

DATE: April 23, 2013

SUBJECT: Emergency Planning Guidelines for Local School Systems (LSS) and Schools
ADOPTION

PURPOSE:

The Maryland State Department of Education, in collaboration with local emergency planning points of contact, the Maryland State Police, the Maryland Emergency Management Agency, the Maryland Department of the Environment, and the Governor's Office of Crime Control and Prevention, has completed a revision of the *Emergency Planning Guidelines for Local School Systems and Schools (2013)*. The Guidelines provided in the link below represent those efforts and are presented to the Maryland State Board of Education for review and approval. Feedback from Maryland's local Superintendents and their staffs has been requested and included in this version.

BACKGROUND/HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE:

In 2003, the Department issued *Emergency Planning Guidelines for Local School Systems and Schools* based on training received by the Federal Emergency Management Agency, an examination of guidelines from other states, exemplar practices from local school systems in Maryland, and guidance received from the United States Department of Education. Local school systems were asked to update their existing practices and plans based on this guidance. Each local school system's emergency plan was reviewed by a panel and feedback was provided. Each year local school systems were asked to submit any revisions to the Department based on changes that were made in their plans.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Staff in the Division of Student, Family, and School Support have consulted with local school system emergency planning colleagues, the Maryland Emergency Management Agency, the Maryland State Police, and the Governor's Office of Crime Control and Prevention in revising these guidelines. The guidelines address the four areas of emergency preparedness including mitigation/prevention, preparedness, response, and recovery. In addition, the guidelines contain ten appendices that offer local school systems further resources to consider when constructing their emergency guidelines. It is important to note that emergency plans can only be effectively implemented when the plan is practiced and evaluated through a feedback loop of ongoing planning, training, and updating.

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Moreover, emergency planning guidelines from other states have been examined and best practices contained in those have been included. The local school system superintendents of schools and their staff have provided input into this document. Some noted improvements in these Guidelines include, but are not limited to, the emphasis on hazard assessment, incident command, training, practice drills, and evaluation.

Upon adoption, local school systems will examine their current emergency plans both at the Central Office and school levels and make revisions as needed. Staff in DOSFSS will implement a process by which those plans are reviewed to ensure compliance with these Guidelines.

ACTION:

Request adoption of these guidelines.

Link to proposed Guidelines <http://docushare.msde.state.md.us/docushare/dsweb/View/Collection-30659/Document-169288>